

Mayor's Council on Disability
Chattanooga, Tennessee
Meeting Minutes
January 11, 2010

Chairperson, John Jackson, Creative Initiative
Vice Chair, Bryon Kluesner, UTC OSD Office
Secretary, Carol Martin, UTK Office of Disability & Employment
Parliamentarian, Jill Hindman, Dev Disability Council, Region 3

Council Members

Sandra Booher, Moccasin Bend Hospital
Jim Queen, CARTA Care-A-Van
Tommy Gates, Siskin Hospital for Physical Rehabilitation
Carolyn Boyd, Signal Centers
Phillip Stevens, City of Chattanooga
Karl Epperson
Nichol Myers, AIM Center
Robert White, Epilepsy Foundation
Katie Jones, Merrill Lynch (Special Needs)

Mayor's Office Participants

Matt Lea, Assistant to Mayor (absent)
Jay Piercy, OMA City Compliance Officer
Kathie Fulgham, Mayor's Office

Absent members:

Carolyn Boyd
Nichol Myers
Phillip Stephens
Karl Epperson
Jill Hindman
Tommy Gates

Visitors:

Chris Jackson, TN DIDS
Greg Helms, Hamilton Cnty Emergency Mgmt
Greg Smith, Hamilton Cnty Emergency Mgmt
Dennis Dodson, Mental Health Advocate
Danielle Hooper, CABIA
Bea Lyons, Hearing Loss Association
Lt. Danna Vaughn, Chattanooga Police Dept
Chuck Courtwright, Joe Johnson Mental Hlth
Judy Bird, Hamilton County Social Services

Mark Schreiber, Fortwood

John welcomed the group and asked the Council members to introduce themselves. He then asked the group if they had any changes or corrections to the November minutes. The Council approved the minutes as submitted.

Elaine Adams, Therapeutic Recreation, said she has a lot going on and she apologizes that the agenda has not yet been sent out due to a server problem. She said they still have the monthly art program, basketball, power soccer. They will be bringing back adaptive rock climbing. The program is completed through May and will be sent out before the end of the week. She also mentioned a website called www.meetup.com that they may start using for some of the young adults to arrange their own activities.

Terri Rice announced that she now has a very active support services program for blind and visually impaired individuals. She covers a lot of orientation and mobility issues. One of the issues this group now has is the issue of pedestrians getting hit by cars. This group would like to work on awareness programs to slow people down, educate them about guide dogs, canes and wheelchairs. She asked the MCD to consider working with this group on this issue. The support services group meets the second Saturday of every month at 2:00 p.m. The next meeting will be at the UTC OSD Office.

John introduced the guest speaker, Chuck Courtright, Criminal Justice Mental Health Liaison from Joe Johnson, who will speak about the new Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Program of Hamilton County. Chuck introduced himself and other CIT Program Committee members Lt. Danna Vaughn representing the City of Chattanooga, Dennis Dodson, Mental Health Consumer representative, Mark Schreiber from Fortwood, and Judy Bird, Hamilton County Social Services. He said that the group is led by Captain Michael Crisp of the Hamilton County Sheriff's Department. Chuck said CIT was established in Memphis after a police officer shot a mental health consumer. UT and NAMI and the Memphis Police Department established a CIT. Canada and Australia programs use the Memphis

model. About a year ago Hamilton County became interested in this program and sent a committee to class in Memphis. The group had their first class of officers in September. Basically the CIT is a community collaboration of law enforcement and community working together, giving police officers the tools to understand how to deal with individuals with mental illness or other disabilities. The officers are volunteers; they volunteer their time for a 40 hour training session. The first training had 20 or 25 officers. The next training is in March and a couple of outside agencies will be participating. Chuck gave a few examples of how the training has already helped and estimated that 34 people could have ended up in jail had it not been for this training. Regarding the March training, he said that those capable of role playing to help the officers practice are welcome to that portion of the training. He said that the word is out about this officer training and some consumers are now asking for a CIT Officer.

Dennis Dodson said that after the first CIT training in Memphis, Sheriff Hammond said that regardless of funding we were going ahead with this because it's the right thing to do. Since then, Dennis has observed that other officers like Captain Crisp and Lieutenant Vaughn do this from their heart. Dennis pointed out that jail costs \$1,500 a month and with these cases being diverted because of the CIT Officers, it's good for all parties involved.

Jim Queen, CARTA, said that most of the calls he hears about are problems on the fixed route buses involving individuals who would be helped by a CIT Officer. He said that he believes this program will be very beneficial for CARTA.

Chuck responded that the trained officers are also using this training when called to a domestic dispute. Bea Lyons asked Chuck if any of the CIT Officers can assist families who are deaf or hard of hearing. He responded that Sharon at the Partnership's Deaf Services has already brought that to his attention and the CIT Officers do have a number to call if an interpreter is needed.

Carol Martin said the disABILITY in the Workplace/9th Annual Awards Program was very successful with about 200 attendees. There were about 55 organizations present, including 36 different employers. Some of the employers brought a large group – Bi-L0 brought over 30 managers; Wal-Mart's Regional HR Manager brought the individual store HR Managers. She said that in addition to honoring the employees with disabilities, the purpose of events such as this is to demonstrate to employers that people with disabilities can make great employees. With the donations from Blue Cross and Unum, the event broke even, which was the goal. She thanked everyone on the Mayor's Council and the SE TN Placement Consortium who worked to make this event successful. Carol thanked Chris Jackson for taking photos at the event and passed out a one page handout with a few of these photos. She said she would ask Phillip to upload the other photos to the MCD website.

Jim Queen, CARTA, said they are in the midst of spending some of their stimulus money. They have removed all of the parking lot for the big buses and laid down new concrete. The estimated cost was \$1.3 million, but the cost is going to be under \$900,000. The incline will be down for repairs soon and that will be paid for by stimulus money also. He reported that the Care-A-Van has served 1200 more clients in the first six months of this year. That is without an increase in vans. Jim doesn't know why this number is up so high this year. He mentioned that the population is aging, but he suspects part of the increase could be due to the fact that TennCare cut out transportation to dialysis and many of these folks now must count on public transportation.

Terri Rice, Rehabilitation Teacher for the Blind, said that she would like to announce the Deaf-Blind Camp that Lana Newton is putting together in April - April 22nd through the 25th at Dogwood Lodge in Soddy Daisy. Terri said that Lana is busy getting donations for this camp. TVA has donated 75 backpacks and she needs contributions to fill these – things like flashlights, etc. Anyone interested in volunteering or contributing, please contact Lana at Lana.Newton@tn.gov

Jay Piercy, City Office of Multicultural Affairs ADA Officer, announced that this office is printing an updated version of the ADA Community Resource Directory. If anyone wants to reserve some copies, please let Jay know. It should be printed in about 60 days. Some of the copies will be distributed to United Way and the Partnership. If anyone wants to reserve a copy, contact Jay at piercy_j@mail.chattanooga.gov. Jay said this is an update on a document prepared in the past. They printed 500 copies last year and expect to print that many again this year. He said the print is in 18 point but is not being produced in Braille. Bryon Kluesner, UTC OSD, said that he may be able to donate a couple of copies through his office, but he warned that a 40 page document would be about 160 pages in Braille. Terri Rice suggested that the document be made available electronically

John thanked everyone for participating and said that the next meeting is scheduled for February 1st at 3:00 p.m. at the DRC.

Minutes respectfully submitted,
Carol Martin, Secretary
Mayor's Council on Disability